

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

Please amend claims 20 and 21 as follows.

1. (Original) A method for breeding an azalea which breeds deciduous azalea with converting it into an evergreen property, in which a gene concerning evergreen is introduced into the deciduous azalea to breed an evergreen azalea.

2. (Original) The method for breeding evergreen azalea according to Claim 1, wherein said introduction of the gene is crossing utilizing a evergreen azalea as a flower parent or a seed parent.

3. (Original) The method for breeding an azalea according to Claim 1, wherein said deciduous azalea is *R. reticulatum*, *R. dilatatum* var. *satsumense*, or *Rhododendron weyrichii*, and said evergreen azalea is *R. eriocarpum*.

4. (Original) The method for breeding an azalea according to Claim 1, wherein said crossing is mutual crossing.

5. (Original) The method for breeding an azalea according to Claim 1, wherein *Rhododendron weyrichii*, which is deciduous azalea, and *R. dilatatum* var. *satsumense*, which is deciduous azalea are crossed to introduce a gene concerning evergreen is introduced into the deciduous azalea.

6. (Original) A method for breeding an azalea which breeds non-heat resistant azalea with converting it into heat resistance, in which a gene concerning heat resistance is introduced into the non-heat resistant azalea to breed a heat resistant azalea.

7. (Original) The method for breeding an azalea according to Claim 6, wherein the introduction of said gene is conducted by crossing a heat resistant azalea as a pollen parent or a seed parent.

8. (Original) The method for breeding an azalea according to Claim 6, wherein said heat resistant azalea is *Rhododendron eriocarpum*, and said non-heat resistant azalea is Kurume Azalea or Kurume Azalea Hybrids.

9. (Original) The method for breeding an azalea according to Claim 6, wherein said non-heat resistant azalea is evergreen azalea or deciduous azalea, and said heat resistant azalea is deciduous azalea or evergreen azalea, and wherein an evergreen property is imparted to said azalea which is bred with introducing a gene concerning evergreen property into said deciduous azalea.

10. (Original) A method for breeding an azalea which breeds one season flowering azalea with converting it into ever flowering property, in which a gene concerning ever-flowering property is introduced into the one season flowering azalea to breed an ever-flowering azalea.

11. (Original) The method for breeding an azalea according to Claim 10, wherein a gene which can repeat ever-flowering property every year preferably being introduced into one season flowering azalea.

12. (Original) The method for breeding an azalea according to Claim 10, wherein said introduction of the gene is conducted by crossing utilizing ever-flowering azalea as a pollen parent or a seed parent.

13. (Original) The method for breeding an azalea according to Claim 10, wherein said ever-flowering azalea is *Rhododendron oldhamii*, and said one season flowering azalea is Hirado azalea or Hirado Azalea Hybrids.

14. (Original) The method for breeding an azalea according to Claim 10, wherein said one season flowering is deciduous azalea or evergreen azalea, and said ever-flowering azalea is evergreen azalea or deciduous azalea, and wherein an evergreen property is imparted to said azalea which is bred with introducing a gene concerning ever-flowering property into said one season flowering azalea.

15. (Original) The method for breeding an azalea according to Claim 11, wherein said one season flowering is deciduous azalea or evergreen azalea, and said ever-flowering azalea is evergreen azalea or deciduous azalea, and wherein an evergreen property is imparted to said azalea which is bred with introducing a gene concerning ever-flowering property into said one season flowering azalea.

16. (Original) The method for breeding an azalea according to Claim 10, wherein said one season flowering is non heat resistant azalea or heat resistant azalea, and said ever-flowering azalea is heat resistant azalea or non-heat resistant azalea, and wherein an heat resistance is imparted to said azalea which is bred with introducing a gene concerning heat resistance property into said one season flowering azalea.

17. (Original) The method for breeding an azalea according to Claim 11, wherein said one season flowering is non heat resistant azalea or heat resistant azalea, and said ever-flowering azalea is heat resistant azalea or non-heat resistant azalea, and wherein a

heat resistance is imparted to said azalea which is bred with introducing a gene concerning heat resistance property into said one season flowering azalea.

18. (Original) The method for breeding an azalea according to Claim 14, wherein said one season flowering is non heat resistant azalea or heat resistant azalea, and said ever-flowering azalea is heat resistant azalea or non-heat resistant azalea, and wherein a heat resistance is imparted to said azalea which is bred with introducing a gene concerning heat resistance property into said one season flowering azalea.

19. (Original) The method for breeding an azalea according to Claim 15, wherein said one season flowering is non heat resistant azalea or heat resistant azalea, and said ever-flowering azalea is heat resistant azalea or non-heat resistant azalea, and wherein a heat resistance is imparted to said azalea which is bred with introducing a gene concerning heat resistance property into said one season flowering azalea.

20. (Currently Amended) The method for breeding an azalea according to any one of Claims 1, 6, ~~9-11, and 14-19~~ or 10, wherein the selection of two different azaleas for crossing is conducted by using genotype  $HXHX \cdot Pg/pg \cdot Cy/cy/Dp/dp$  which is inheritance of main anthocyanidins, pelargonidin (Pgn), cyanidin (Cyn), and delphinidin (Dpn), concerning the exhibition of flower color.

21. (Currently Amended) A novel azalea created by the method for breeding an azalea according to any one of Claims 1, 6, ~~9-11, and 14-19~~ or 10.